

civilization of the Southwest will not be determined by any swift or mechanical process. The character of the future is being decided by the conditions of today. It is this fact which gives such tremendous significance to Home Missions in Texas.

The present status and the signs of the time make it imperative that Gospel work be done quickly and adequately. In the very nature of the case, a new country, ambitious men, alluring opportunities, the ideals which dominate thought and action are industrial. There is an impatience with things moral and spiritual and religious; particularly if in any way they seem to hinder the untrammelled pursuit of gain. There are multitudes of men in Texas who would call themselves good citizens who seem to think that spiritual ideals of life, religious fidelity to God, cultivation of purity of heart and practical recognition of conscience are things negligible, or at least of secondary value, in the substantial upbuilding of the Commonwealth. There is a fever in the blood of Texas for the quick conversion of her latent domain into marketable wealth and power. And there is a possibility that this fever, this lust for material progress, may so run riot as to consign the future to the gross worship of some Egyptian calf and put upon her civilization the plague spots of spiritual degeneracy and decay.

What Texas Needs.

I have sympathy with the program which would make two blades of grass where but one grew before, and with the ambition to see the waste places become a garden; but what Texas needs today and for tomorrow is not so much captains of industry, as more men and women who love God and truth and righteousness; God's noble men and noble women who, in whatever lot or station they may live, will stand like great granite boulders for that which is pure and true and right. Truly there is no sublimer enterprise than to foster the missionary activity of the Church of Christ, to transform this coming empire into an empire of God. If the children of the Kingdom are wise in this their day and generation, there is no time to play at Home Missions, but the hour is come when devout men and women should lay their lives and their treasure upon the altar for God and the Fatherland.

Do these conditions lay a specific duty upon Presbyterian people, as such? Home Missions in Texas is an enterprise in which other great communions of the Church of Christ are putting forth their strength and investing their substance. We sometimes see the enthusiast for Presbyterian Home Missions figuratively tearing his hair and evidently in a panic with the fear that the land will be pre-empted by the other denominations of the Church. To me the urgency of Home Missions in Texas does not lie so much in the competitive activity of other Churches.

There is something needed in the future of this State which the other denominations can never supply. In saying this I speak no word against the worth or value of any Christian communion. But the Texas of the future will never have certain elements of strength and stability, will not have the finest ideals of personal and organic life, in a word, her civilization will be lacking

in some of the noblest, most vital, qualities unless the Presbyterian Church, under God, does her duty in and for Texas.

The great doctrines of the Presbyterian system tend to produce a type of character which is distinctive, and to impart a quality to human thought and action which will come from no other source. The future of Texas will not be as great, and the structure of her civilization will not be as fine, as it might be unless there is builded into it something of the granite and iron, something of the reverence for God and law, something of the dignity and stability, which I am persuaded will be put there only by the influence of the Presbyterian Church.

And the urgency of Home Missions in the great Southwest lies in the fact that if the coming structure is to contain these elements and the traces of our handiwork, these cannot be put on at the top, but must be worked in at the foundation. If we fail to do it now the opportunity will be forever lost.

It is not a question of competition with other Churches, it is not merely a question of the prestige and comparative greatness of the Presbyterian Church, but it is the deeper, far-reaching question of whether the coming Empire of the Southwest shall have in it those elements of strength and blessing which it was our distinctive and divine mission to impart.

San Antonio, Texas.

PLUMTREE AND THE BOYS' SCHOOL.

By Rev. J. P. Hall.

A friend once arriving at Plumtree asked, "How did you ever find this place to locate the school here?" It is, from the railroad, ten miles deep back in the wild and beautiful mountains of western North Carolina. The region carries a full load of undeveloped resources, shielded by forests and rocks. The roads are up and down and in the streams. Here and there is a saw mill, and further back from the coves the hidden homes peep out.

Beginnings at Plumtree.

Two men who were born and reared at Plumtree gave us an invitation five years ago to open a Presbyterian school here. We chose a laurel thicket on the bank of Toe river in view of the two village stores to build the little Blue Bonnet church and school. It is the spot where in earlier days the mica miners coming in on Saturdays, would shoot off the choicer parts of a beef. A witness of the old and the new at Plumtree often says, "I am reminded while sitting in prayer meeting that my seat is just the place this used to happen."

Within a year after the little school was begun a boys' school was planned. The place was always crowded with boys. The congregations at church would often be made up of only boys and men. Mr. C. W. Burleson gave the pretty seven-acre campus, and Dr. S. L. Morris found a friend who gave one thousand dollars to help build the pleasant dormitory which soon became the happy home of many a worthy boy. Another year and Morris Hall, with recitation rooms and auditorium, was built, students' hammers being largely used in its